

No “Myth” and “Legend”!

👁️ **Eyewitnesses of His majesty (vv.16-18)**

☆ **Prophets in the Light of dawn (vv.19-21)**

In the name of Jesus, God’s shining Glory-in-the-Flesh, fellow teammates of the Champion:

If you’ve ever driven in Phoenix, you know they’re several decades behind on their freeway system. Now imagine a million more cars clogging those city streets for the Super Bowl. The thrill of victory and the agony of defeat grip our gridiron like little else. But even before the big game the glory is fading. Losers get blasted in the media worse than a freshman JV team. And each year another set of names added to the list of winners dims the shine on previous championship rings.

Doesn’t our media madness show how nearsighted and blind we are? How can romantic movies or *American Idol* raise our blood pressure more than God’s Word? Yet bright lights easily outshine our love for God who commands us to love Him with all our heart and soul and mind. Like a football to the side of the head, we would not see it coming as American idolatry doomed us to eternal defeat in the hot locker room of hell. Only a miracle of God’s grace can lead us out onto the field to fight the good fight of faith. **No “Myth” and “Legend”!** Peter says. Good thing! Peter and Christ’s other two apostles were...

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How trustworthy are eyewitnesses? If you assembled thousands of fans in a stadium with everyone watching closely, would they all agree? The closer the game, the more screaming at the refs. Since they sometimes disagree, the head referee has to check instant replay to see every angle for the right call. Maybe it’s not so surprising that eyewitnesses don’t always hold up in a court of law.

But don’t think for a second that lack of technology puts us at a loss with the authority of the Bible. It stands as God’s inspired, inerrant, infallible Word. The God-inspired Apostle Peter uses a very important technical term when he says, **“We did not follow cleverly invented stories when we told you about the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.”**

Eyewitness training came clear to my squeamish eyeballs in a college biology class. I won’t tell you what we had to dissect because I don’t want to offend all the cat lovers here. And, no, I did not enjoy it. Even though the veins were dyed to make them stand out, the rest looked like a mass of tissue until the professor pointed out the spleen, stomach, heart, etc. Everyone in the medical field has to spend hours and hours scrutinizing human anatomy until the best of the best get the microscopic scalpels that can cut in order to heal. You wouldn’t let a man off the street work under your hood, much less under your scalp.

Advanced training as *eyewitnesses* (εποπται) is in the Holy Spirit’s choice of words here. Former fisherman Peter was trained along with all of Jesus’ disciples to *clearly see* the divine connection between their eyes and God’s Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament. In our Lord’s Transfiguration it was the Father Himself **“speaking [as] a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!’”** (Matthew 17:5 NIV) Such a voice for these educated **Eyewitnesses** carries far more weight of authority than trained storm spotters and law enforcement officers today. For **Eyewitnesses** like Peter have the certification of God Himself.

Do we, **“Listen to him”**? Or do we have trouble with the noisy crowd of scholars claiming the Bible is a batch of well intentioned **“Myth” and “Legend”**? Not one of these negative critics was there on the **“sacred mountain”** of Transfiguration to witness Christ’s glory and brilliance as God. High above the clouds between His shining Epiphany and bloody Passion, do we find it hard to prioritize God’s Word above everything else? Peter wanted his heaven on earth. Do we? So many worldly voices are calling.

But it's just "white noise" as a member mentioned in thanks for parents taking their restless children to our special listening room. Most hearing aids turn up all the sounds, making it harder to "**Listen to him!**" preaching through His called servants. It's like trying to watch football with "surround sound" where the noise crowds out the commentators. Surrounded by too many spiritual voices, we need to click the remote and turn them off in order to "**Listen to him,**" our Lord Jesus Christ through His **Eyewitnesses**. There's got to be morning after the "Big Game." Then you'll be glad you paid close attention to His holy...

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How exciting would it be to get the key to the Metrodome and invite all the local media to come and cover the Big Game? Even little kids can tell you it would be a huge waste of time. Wrong place, wrong time, and no will power or sincere energy can put players on the field in Minneapolis when the game is in Phoenix. It does not happen by little minds wanting to see things closer to home.

This is why it baffles me how serious scholars insist that Jewish prophets wrote what they wanted, when they wanted. Even with "freedom of speech" in America, eventually the truth comes out and pressures publishers to get the story right. Reporting the six-day Creation and the world-wide Flood may seem like "**Myth**" and "**Legend**" to some, but the more I compare the Biblical accounts with other "scriptures," the more convinced I am that the Bible is unique. Other "holy books" like the *Quran* and the *Book of Mormon* only claim to come from angels to Muhammad or Joseph Smith. Meanwhile, the Bible warns that "**Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.**" (2 Corinthians 11:14) The Bible alone claims to come directly from God by inspiration of the Holy Spirit to His chosen penmen, His holy writers.

Peter writes: "**Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.**" For example, Isaiah did not just decide one day to write that the virgin would be with child and give birth to a son who would be called Immanuel, God with us. (Isaiah 7:14) Daniel could not have known how to write about centuries of empires like the Babylonian, Persian, Alexandrian and Roman – through the reign of the Anti-Christ all the way to Judgment Day. What masochist would stay in Jerusalem the way Jeremiah did and keep predicting defeat when he could have run far, far away? And what lunatics would claim resurrection for a crucified Christ on the third day from a rich man's tomb when a single wrong detail could easily disprove everything else? The Bible alone of all the religious books says, "**Test everything.**" (1 Thessalonians 5:21) The Bible holds up to every test – inspired, inerrant and infallible – the holy Word of God.

In the new stadium west of Phoenix, cameramen are polishing their lenses and checking to make sure there are no glitches. God wants this intensity in us. For "**we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.**" Jesus says: "**I am...the bright Morning Star.**" (Revelation 22:16 NIV) He shines the brilliance of God's grace and glory for all our fumbles and missed passes, bad calls and foolish plays. Our laziness, deaf ears to our Coach from heaven – for all our sins Jesus suffered death in our place and erased God's hard drive. Jesus, the ultimate Referee, died for convicted criminals like us and paid our penalty under God's wrath to bring home the winning trophy of everlasting life. He put His championship ring on our finger in our Baptism, gold that can never tarnish or fade. It's not enough to sit on the sidelines and watch Him win. Our Champion wants us on the field with Him in the mud and sweat of life, our whole heart "in the game." Christ's victory is our victory winning souls for heaven. Christ's Transfiguration means we can play with reckless abandon as we follow Christ to the cross and through the empty tomb to glory everlasting. "**This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!**" May our whole life be one great: Amen!